THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) Plants are not patentable as per the provisions of the Patents Act, 1970.

(c) and (d) The Geographical Indications (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 provides for protection of the geographical indications in relation to seeds which originates from a specific region or locality within the country, if it has a special quality or reputation or other characteristics essentially attributable to its geographical origin. The Geographical Indications (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 came into force from 15-9-2003 and so far the following three geographical indications have been registered:-

(a) Darjeeling Tea from the State of West Bengal

(b) Pochampally Ikat Sarees from the State of Andhra Pradesh

(c) Chandheri Sarees from the State of Madhya Pradesh

Talk with Japan to avoid double taxation

3563. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Japan had talks with India on avoiding double taxation to give new momentum to bilateral trade between India and Japan; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, and the steps being taken to boost bilateral trade?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Central Government is authorized to enter into Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) by virtue of power vested under Section 90 of the Income TaxAct, 1961. In exercise of this power a DTAA was entered into by the Government of India with the Government of Japan in 1989 which was notified *vide* GSR 101 (E) dated 01.03.1990. The Government of India and the Government of Japan have decided to renegotiate this Treaty. The steps being taken, on an on-going basis, for increasing India's exports to Japan include participation in trade fairs/exhibitions, organizing buyer-seller meets, exchange of delegations at both Government and business levels, exchange of information, etc.